

**SEVEN**  
**RADIO TALKS**  
**ON**  
**THEOSOPHY**

**SEVENTEENTH SERIES**

*As Presented By*

**THE FOUNDATION FOR**  
**RADIO THEOSOPHY**  
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**OJAI, CALIFORNIA**

I am happy to have the opportunity to introduce a series of broadcasts over this station upon the marvelous and very practical subject of Theosophy. People who are unfamiliar with the word "Theosophy" may wonder if it is a study that has practical value and interest. Actually, Theosophy is one of the most interesting of subjects and it is eminently practical for anyone who wishes to understand more clearly what life is all about and therefore how to live a more efficient, a happier and a more successful life.

In these days, an increasing number of people want their questions answered as to what is the real nature of man and his relationship to the universe. Whence have we come? And what happens to us following our departure from this life? And that isn't all. Why do so many people suffer undeservedly while others with less merit seem to enjoy rich rewards? And here's one that everybody would like to know the answer to. Is death the terrible event we make it seem? If it is not, is there some very real part of us that continues to live after the body perishes? Well, these and similar questions will be answered during this series of broadcasts.

Humanity today is awakening to the fact that we are living through a time that might well be described as the end of the world. I hasten to add that I don't mean the end of the world in the sense that everything is coming to an end. Rather, that this is the end of an age and the beginning of a new age. This view is understandable if we notice that our long established ideas are passing through a transition. The world as we have understood it is changing. Certain basic ideas that have been held for many hundreds of years are no longer tenable when viewed through the new knowledge that modern science has introduced. Our western civilization has grown and prospered primarily as the result of the progress in its sciences. Certain basic assumptions about the nature of our world originated with the Greeks. It was Democritus who postulated over twenty-five hundred years ago that physical matter is simply an assemblage of indivisible pellets of material substance called "atoms". Atoms were thought of as the building blocks of the universe. Trees, rocks, oceans--all physical forms and substances--were supposed to be constructed of these building blocks,



assembled in characteristic ways.

This explanation caused our practical thinking about life to become limited to what we could see or otherwise contact with our five senses. For example, if I were to ask you right now what is real to you, how many would answer that the real world, after all, consists of what one can see and touch and hear and taste and smell. This is the information that we collect through the five senses. And the world that we perceive in this way is called the sensate world. It is the sensate world that we have thought of so largely as the real world because it is so much with us that today is "coming to an end" in the sense that it is no longer possible with the new knowledge to view even physical reality in this way. The idea that the physical world of mountains and oceans and continents is made up of little pellets of matter ended when it became undeniable that matter is vibration, and that we must think of the earth and all that it contains as only substantial appearances of infinitely tiny fluid waves of vibration.

This is a fact that no longer can be denied. Atomic fission and fusion are stark realities in our world today. We have to think of vibrations now rather than pellets of matter if we are to think about the basic substance of life in any real way. The material, sensate world is no longer the total reality it has seemed. The world of nature's finer forces is infinitely more real. It has become more important now than heretofore to give attention to that which creates or sets forces into motion. Not only cosmic forces but human forces as well--our thoughts, our feelings, our intentions and actions.

Theosophy has important information about the laws that govern these forces. Information that is just beginning to be uncovered by modern sciences. This is why I say that Theosophy is an intensely practical subject for us to give attention to today.

Now, such a gigantic change as the end of an age does not happen suddenly. For a century or so, our age has been moving toward this climax. For over fifty years scientific thinkers have been adding to man's knowledge the greater discoveries about the nature of matter and the universe that have brought about the changes in human outlook now in evi-

dence. One of the most significant events, in my opinion, occurred in 1875 when The Theosophical Society was founded to reintroduce to the world the knowledge of Theosophy.

Its reappearance has provided the opportunity to thousands of its students to prepare for the changes that are already appearing in our thinking. For many decades the literature of Theosophy has spread far and wide over the world, calling attention to the broader view of life that has now become necessary for adoption if mankind is to move successfully forward.

Theosophy is a body of knowledge which renders life intelligible. Its principles form the basis of all religions. It has appeared in other civilizations with information about the true nature of man and his relationship to God. It is the knowledge about the past and the future of humanity, about the purposeful design that is innate in life and the ultimate fulfillment that is coming in the far future. Theosophy puts death in its rightful place as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. Theosophy brings to the world a new science of the spirit teaching man to know the spirit as his real self and the body as his servant. It unveils hidden meanings in our religious symbols and makes of every religion an expression of the divine wisdom.

Now, you mustn't think of Theosophy as a new religion. Its purpose is to help the followers of all faiths to understand more profoundly their various beliefs and practices. Theosophy was present under that name in the early centuries of western civilization, the word being derived from the two Greek words "theos" "sophia" which can be translated as "divine wisdom". It seems strange, indeed, when one first learns that such a body of knowledge has existed throughout thousands of years. But the fact of its existence can be followed in the history of civilizations and religions.

Among the earliest historical records are the traditions of the Mystery Schools that can be traced back to India and indeed into the dim and forgotten ages beyond all records. From India, the Mysteries were carried to Egypt and elsewhere. The Arabians, the Israelites and the Chaldeans had their Mysteries as did the Greeks their Eleusinian Mysteries. Without some knowledge of the methods and the under-



lying purpose of these Mystery Schools, it is difficult indeed for us to realize how much was known about the laws of nature and of life in these olden times. Plato and Pythagoras and other famous men in those days were members of these schools.

Although western civilization inherited certain of its root ideas from these sources, it has pioneered a new approach to the understanding of truth and of life. Throughout the centuries that have been denoted the dark ages, the perennial philosophy now known as Theosophy appeared again and again in the secret schools of thought such as those of Masonry, of Alchemy and other veiled approaches to the laws governing man's nature and the nature of the universe. Meanwhile, with the growing political and economic freedom of the past couple of centuries and with educational facilities increasing on all sides, the masses of humanity everywhere are being taught the general knowledge of our day.

But it has been a materialistic knowledge establishing as reality the world that can be measured, charted, weighed and observed by the five senses. This learning reached its most rigid form in the nineteenth century. It was then that Theosophy appeared openly to refocus attention on many of the laws of nature that are yet to be recognized by the modern extensions of learning. Anyone hearing Theosophy for the first time may well be amazed that such information exists so readily available, even to its being broadcast as it will be over this station for all who are interested to benefit thereby. No one who has not had the experience can imagine what a change comes over one's thinking and indeed one's entire life when it is realized that we are not here on earth by chance, that there is a Plan, a purpose, that guides us toward a glorious future in this world as well as elsewhere.

In this series of broadcasts, we will touch upon many theosophical subjects in simple terms that can be readily understood. Not only will the explanations be clear, but you will find them stirring your deepest interests. I hope that you and your friends will follow these broadcasts week after week as this fascinating story of Theosophy unfolds its treasured knowledge and the inspiration it will hold for you.

## FROM MAN TO SUPERMAN

The psalmist asks the great question: "What is man that Thou are mindful of him". And the English poet, Alexander Pope, said "the proper study of mankind is man." Now, the teachings of Theosophy enable us to follow this advice with great completeness and fullness, for Theosophy teaches not only of the physical material man but also of his intellectual and spiritual nature and powers. And in this talk with you I am going to put before you as concisely as possible some of the age-old teachings about man, teachings which form part of what is known as the ancient wisdom or Theosophy.

What, then, is man? How is he described? Well, the theosophical definition of man makes him three-fold. He is described as that being in whom highest spirit and lowest matter are united by intellect. A definition of man: That being in whom highest spirit and lowest matter (that's the physical body) are united by intellect. Although thus three-fold in essence, man is also said to be more complex than that. He's manifest in seven ways, or expresses himself at seven levels of consciousness through appropriate vehicles.

And of these seven bodies of man, the physical one in which we are awake just now is the most dense, most solid. The other six are built of finer and finer gradations of substance until the very highest, the most tenuous and most spiritual body of man is reached. Thus man is a three-fold immortal spiritual being, embodied in four mortal material bodies.

Let me describe these seven parts of our make-up. Most important is it that we should understand ourselves. The three parts of man's spiritual nature are reflections in him of God's Will, God's Wisdom and God's Intelligence. Both the Deity and man are three-fold. Or, the Bible puts it, man is made in God's image. Man spiritually is a reflection of the Blessed Trinity. Thus, in Theosophy, the Deity is in no sense either external to man or, in essence, different from him. They are one and indivisible throughout all eternity. And this eternal unity of the spirit of man with the spirit which is God is the great fact concerning man. And in it and in realization of it resides the secret of supreme achievement, the attainment of God-like power and



undisturbable peace. This is a very important truth. Man and God are one. For when the individual fully realizes his unity with God then the whole power of the Cosmos is at his disposal. Such then, briefly, is man's true self, his eternal spiritual soul.

Now, we must consider his four material bodies. In the order of their density, beginning at the most tenuous or subtle, these are: The finest is mental body, built of mind stuff, his instrument of thought; his emotional body, rather denser, built of emotional matter, his vehicle of feeling; his vital, or etheric body, composed of ether; and, finally, the densest, the physical body, composed of solid, liquid, gaseous material. And this is his vehicle of action and self expression in the physical world. And these four bodies: the mental, for thinking; the emotional for desire and feeling; the etheric, for containing the vital essence, and the physical body--they are all subject to death and disintegration. But in his spiritual nature, man is immune from death, immortal.

Then, we may ask, why is the human spirit made to be reincarnated in the physical body? What's the purpose of life? Theosophy answers: The purpose of man's existence is evolution, which is a dual process, part spiritual, part material and bodily. Evolution then consists, on the one hand, of the gradual unfoldment from latency to full action and full activity of man's three-fold spiritual attributes, the divine powers. And, on the other, of the development of these four material vehicles to a condition in which the inner powers are perfectly expressed. And these two processes are parallel. Inner unfoldment is accompanied by outer development. The unified and harmonized mortal bodies together becoming an ever more worthy temple, as St. Paul called them, an ever more worthy and sensitive temple of the God which dwells within them. This is the sublime purpose of life. The goal of human evolution is to reach the standard of perfection described by St. Paul as "the perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ". Furthermore, Theosophy adds, and most important to each and all of us, this attainment of perfection is absolutely certain for the spiritual self of every human being. The command of our Lord, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect", will one day be literally obeyed by every man. Theosophically

we say this: "All God's sons will one day reach His feet however far they stray."

We don't believe in lost souls in Theosophy, you know. Each man is divine and imperishable in his spiritual nature and can't be lost. Furthermore, God is everywhere. And so there is no place in the universe in which we could be lost. We're always safe, and The Everlasting Arms are always underneath.

Now comes that point, another important Theosophical idea. This goal of perfection has already been reached by certain men and women, world saviors, great Masters, adepts, Rishis, as they are called in the East, meaning wise men, Mahatmas, meaning great spirit. They exist on earth, and together, these Elder Brethren of Humanity constitute the Inner Government of our world. They are the true spiritual teachers and inspirers of men. They are the August Body referred to by St. Paul as the Just Men made perfect, the Communion of Saints. And they are also known as the Great White Brotherhood of Adepts.

But how can you and I fulfill this lofty destiny? By means of a succession of lives here on earth. The goal of Adeptship is reached by means of repeated incarnations in these four material bodies of the mortal man. An important subject--rebirth--which is true. Evolution to perfection by means of successive lives on earth. And these lives give us the time, the opportunity and the experience to reach our glorious goal.

Now, the next thought. These successive lives of ours are connected with each other by the operation of the universal law of cause and effect, compensation or readjustment. Let me explain how the law of sowing and reaping, cause and effect, works. Something like this. All our actions, feelings and thoughts produce their own natural and perfectly appropriate reactions. For example, actions which are motivated by love and service, unselfishness and kindness produce a pleasure and a growing feeling of self expression and freedom for self expression. We are encouraged to repeat them. But actions motivated by dislike and greed and selfishness and cruelty produce automatically a pain and an increasing limitation for self expression. We are discouraged from repeating them. Such is the law.



So, you see, suffering is produced by ourselves. It's not a retribution imposed by the Deity. It's not a punishment inflicted from above. It's not an accidental adversity, just bad luck. No. Life is ruled by law. Justice is sure for all of us and all pain is self inflicted. And is educative, teaches us the right way of life. St. Paul says, "God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Now, last, what is the way of sorrow's ceasing? In the main, it is to live by love, by kindness and in harmonious relationships with each other. Our Lord said: "Love one another". And harmlessness and kindliness can become a veritable religion. And we are advised, too, to be always kinder than the situation demands. Not only to save ourselves from suffering, of course, but also for the sake of the beauty and helpfulness of being kind. The Lord Buddha put it in this way: He spoke of the noble eight-fold path--the way to happiness: Right belief, right thought, right speech, right action, right means of livelihood, right exertion or energy, right remembrance and right meditation. "Right" there, of course, means loving, kind, clean and true.

Right belief, right thought, right speech, right action, right means of livelihood--very important--, right energy, right remembrance and right meditation. And the Lord Buddha has summed up these teachings in the following words: To cease from sin, to get virtue, to purify the heart, to serve the world. And our Lord said simply, "Love one another". There is the way of health, happiness and peace.

And such are some of the teachings in Theosophy of the evolution of man to superhumanity.

## REINCARNATION, FACT OR FALLACY

When one travels in the East as I have been doing a great deal, one finds that belief in reincarnation is almost universal throughout the orient. They don't talk very much about it and they certainly don't argue about it. They accept it. They think that we evolve spiritually to perfection by means of successive lives on earth and that the law of cause and effect operates throughout all of these lives ensuring justice to every human being. They regard these two ideas--reincarnation and causation as basic and unchallengeable facts of human life. But we people of the West don't so readily accept them, do we, though they are gradually gaining acceptance. We find all sorts of objections to the idea of rebirth and cause-and-effect.

What are these objections that we find arising in our minds? Let's look at them so that we may try and gain some clear understanding of this idea. I, of course, as a traveling speaker, constantly hear these objections, and one of the commonest is that life in the flesh is so unhappy that people shrink from it. They say, "I don't want to come back here again. Once is enough for me." One cannot but sympathize with those whose experience of life has been so unfortunate as to bring them to such a conclusion.

Nevertheless, according to the doctrine of Reincarnation, the objection is invalid, it is misconceived. For, by rebirth is not implied the return to earth of our present, named selves. We, as bodily persons do not reincarnate. The personal self with its outward and its mental characteristics, its race, name, creed, outlook, does not reincarnate. At death, that disappears. That which down here we generally regard as ourselves is not in reality our true selves at all.

The real self of man is an eternal, immortal, spiritual being quite distinct, we should remember, from the physical body. And being immortal and eternal it does not, cannot die. The body can. The body has a beginning, the body is mortal and it inevitably passes away. But the inward soul, the true spiritual self behind the bodily veil--that never dies. And according to the doctrine of reincarnation, it is this, the immortal Pilgrim God within the body, which reincarnates, which is undergoing a process of evolution



to the stature of the perfect man through successive lives. It is this which reincarnates and not our bodily selves.

When, therefore, we say and think in objection to rebirth, "I do not want to return", we need have no fear. We, as we normally know ourselves, do not return. It is the divine essence, the spiritual self with its acquired individual attributes, which is said to reincarnate.

Then, there is another objection I often hear, based upon the possibility that reincarnation might imply transmigration of souls from human into animal forms. This is an entirely erroneous idea of the doctrine. And so this objection is invalid also. When once the life in any form has attained to a certain level of unfoldment, although there may be delay or digression, there is no real retrogression. Men are never reborn as animals.

Then, there is another point of view about reincarnation concerning reunion. The mind may shrink from accepting the idea of reincarnation on the ground that rebirth will so separate loved ones as to preclude all possibility of future reunion. But this also won't stand up. Neither birth nor death nor rebirth can ever completely and finally separate those between whom a deep and strong spiritual, intellectual or physical bond has been formed. In their spiritual selves wherein the closest affinity has been established through many lives, those who love are forever at one, whether physically embodied or not. And in the state of consciousness in which the spiritual self abides, painful separation is impossible, parting is unknown. Therefore, neither reincarnation nor death itself can separate those who love.

Furthermore, the very fact of existence of so close a bond will cause those who love to descend repeatedly into reincarnation at about the same time and under conditions in which they are likely to meet. They'll be drawn together again by their affinity and the operation of the law of cause and effect. Upon meeting, the new brain which is the seat of memory, may not altogether remember the incidents of the past, but the heart speaks, mutual attraction is felt, love is renewed. Once more a close relationship, though different in character, is established. And so, reincarnation doesn't separate us. It brings us together again.

Memory is another problem. People think that if we can't remember our past lives they can be of no value to us. But a little reflection will show that recollection of the process of education is in no sense essential to the possession of the acquired knowledge and faculty. We do not need to remember the processes of learning to walk, talk, read and write in order to be able to do these things. Similarly, then, the absence of memory of incidents and experiences in past lives doesn't prevent the use of the resultant powers in later incarnations. Actually, the inner self of which I've just been speaking, the reincarnating ego, does retain not only the full memory of all the incidents of past life cycles, but more important, all the capacities as well.

When once we have acquired a faculty or capacity we can never lose it again. It is ours for evermore. So, just as remembrance of childish struggles when learning to walk, talk and read and write is rarely retained in adult life, so the recollection of all the educative experiences of numerous preceding lives is not generally permitted to descend to the new mind and brain. In consequence, the weight of the drama of previous existences is withheld and the mind is left free to investigate and to assimilate new ideas.

This withholding of memory may have been implied in classical references to the River Lethe, as it was called. All philosophers taught that the soul, before coming to earth again, was bathed in the waters of forgetfulness, in the River Lethe. So, they were not overburdened with all the drama, difficulties, and mistakes of former lives. They came to birth in the new child body with a virgin mind and brain, as it were, but with all the inherent faculties, every quality they ever developed, every mastery they ever gained, still there.

And this explains, of course, how it is that children in one family with the same parents and the same ancestry can vary so very much in their capacities. This one will be a natural mechanic, taking straight away to metals and machinery. This one will have artistic tendencies, paints easily. Another will be a pianist, taking to the piano with equal facility. Another has a kind of legal mind. Another likes business and gets on well. Others take up mathematics, or some other line of scholarship. Some are very domestic in their nature and good at everything, shall we say,



in and around the home. They have green thumbs or green fingers, and are good in the house and at home-making, we say. Well, none of these are really "gifts", as we call them. They have all been developed by means of successive lives on earth. Thus we progress life by life under the exact law of cause and effect, giving perfect justice to all. And, at last, perfection is attained.

Now, let me sum up these ideas. The purpose and the meaning of human life is evolution to the stature of perfected man. As St. Paul put it, "to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ". Reincarnation and successive lives on earth provide the necessary time, opportunity and experience in which to grow gradually to perfection. And the whole process is governed by the law of cause and effect. This ensures the strictest justice, from birth to death, to every human being. We need not fear that we could have such a thing as bad luck, for example. Nothing can ever happen to us by chance or that is not just, and that we have not earned. And if we could look back into our former lives we would see actions there, good deeds, noble deeds, beautiful deeds of which our present opportunities and happinesses and health are the result. And if we don't have those and are sick and frustrated, we would also see cruelties and other ignoble, hurtful deeds in former lives. For life, indeed, is ruled by law.

Thus, we progress on and on to the stature of the perfect man. And we will all attain. Every one of us. "All God's sons will one day reach His feet, however far they stray." For there is an omnipotent power, a divine power, ceaselessly at work within the heart and mind and soul of every human being. And this God in us, this Christ in us, under law, by successive lives on earth will ultimately bring us to the stature of the perfected man.

## THE MYSTERY OF CHILD GENIUSES

Let us consider together this problem of genius in general, and especially child prodigies who can achieve virtuosity without the effort demanded for its attainment by many adults. What is the explanation of talent and unusually gifted people? How do children come to possess and display with ease mental powers, artistic faculties and physical genius far beyond those of their elders, some of whom have studied and practiced for half a lifetime?

Let us first look at some well known instances. Here is a real-life story of one of them. There is a child reported in the New Zealand press to be a new Datus. I wonder if you know who Datus was. He was a man who used to appear in the music halls with a most astonishing memory. You could ask him almost any question and he could answer it at once. Well, here was the case of a child aged only three and three-quarter years who was astounding interviewers with the ease by which he read Shakespeare, read the newspapers, novels, fairy tales, magazines, and remembered telephone numbers; and could count up to one thousand. The name of this youthful wizard is Jonathan Richard Cocking. And he lives with his father and mother in a place called Hendon, not very far outside of London.

Jonathan reads his newspapers regularly and he followed the Korean war closely. A lot of tests have been tried out on Jonathan to see if the claims made for him really are genuine. He passed them all with flying colors. He could do crossword puzzles, he beat his pals at games, and yet he is a normal, well-behaved, jolly sort of a child, who looks upon his own gifts as he would upon a joke or a game. His parents rather discouraged him because they were afraid he would develop too quickly and overtax his strength. But his natural memory really is incredible. He could talk when he was ten months old and was really a fluent conversationalist when he was one year only. His mother said, "He's mad about busses and his craze for them spurred him on because he wanted to understand all about tickets, destinations and numbers." Only one year old.

Then, Jonathan went for a holiday to Wales. There he learned to reel off those long and difficult Welsh names before he'd been there for a week. So his father says. And another



er, rather bad habit that Jonathan has is that he corrects adults' grammar, which isn't very good in a little boy of three and three-quarters years old. Some of his friends do not like it. Well, before he was four years old, he was three feet eight inches tall, and when he is not reading aloud for tests at fifty words a minute, he amuses himself by playing with his toy dogs, writing in his writing book or learning the telephone numbers of friends, neighbors and tradesmen. He never makes a mistake. All the same, says his father, Jonathan is no prig.

What can be the explanation of these and similar remarkable powers displayed by such very young people? Why did Sir William Hamilton at the age of thirteen know thirteen different languages when it takes an ordinary man several years to master any single one of them? Why should Mozart and so many others show in early childhood musical and artistic powers that many of us cannot hope to attain after lifelong work? There was a great English astrologer, you know, called Allan Leo, and without any previous study he took up that very difficult science which is known to tax the keenest intelligence, and he quickly became an expert.

Well, one explanation which is offered by Theosophy of the phenomenal powers made so early in life is that the inner self, the true individuality behind this bodily veil of ours, sometimes called the ego, has concentrated on these studies in former lives. And this concentration has enabled these people to master both the theory and the technique of such subjects. In consequence, there are some of them born with an instinctive knowledge or natural flair in those directions in a later life. Heredity, you know, is not, cannot, be a satisfactory explanation, for very often an examination of the parentage and earlier ancestry of the genius fails to reveal the presence of special aptitudes which could explain the youthful precocity and virtuosity of their gifted descendant.

Let us take Mozart, for example, and look at his life. Here's an announcement which appeared in a German newspaper in 1763 advertising an appearance of the boy Mozart. "Positively the last concert. The boy, not yet seven, will perform on the harpsichord, play a concerto for violin, and accompany symphonies on the clavichord, the keyboard being covered with a cloth, and he will do this as easily as if he could see

the keys. He will name all notes sounded at a distance, singular or in chords" (that is called absolute pitch, by the by) "and he will improvise on harpsichord and organ as long as desired." Such was the announcement of one of his concerts. Thus, the most universal genius of music the world has ever known, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, was advertised as if he were a side-show freak.

Then, there was that other German boy, Goethe, also destined to become immortal. He was in the audience at that performance, and years later, Goethe could still recall the far off, bright picture of the merry-faced little musician who ran to the bench before the harpsichord in his absurd, exquisite costume of lilac satin and powdered wig and tiny sword and played with such mastery and verve. Mozart was born with an inexplicably complete gift, that is, unless you recognize reincarnation. He possessed absolute pitch, as I've just said, infallible rhythm and natural comprehension of harmony. At the age of four, he began to learn to play the clavichord, the forerunner of our modern piano. At five, he picked up a violin, and reading at sight, managed to play through six trios with his father and a friend. He read and wrote notes before he could do as much with letters. Compositions dating even from his sixth year display the unique characteristics which later came to be recognized as peculiar to the music of Mozart and Mozart alone. How strange that so young a child could master and could command and lead such a large orchestra.

Of course, one readily sees now how the doctrine of reincarnation solves this problem which child prodigies propound. Their strange genius has been brought over from former lives in which mastery of their subjects was attained. Then, in the new life, in consequence of their previous achievements, they merited a parentage and a body, the mechanism, you see, through which their acquired egoic genius could be expressed. Thereafter, if such is the plan for the new life, they display their unusual faculties, and often while still quite young. Here, then, is a practicable, livable, philosophy of life which explains practically all its mysteries, including this of child genius.

Let me just state this philosophy, which we can all really live, because it is so very practical. Perfection is the goal of human life. Reincarnation, that is, successive lives



on earth, grant us the time in which to develop all our qualities, faculties and capacities to the highest degree and also the technique of expressing them beautifully. And this long process of development all occurs with strict justice to each and every one of us because there is a law of sowing and reaping, as St. Paul called it, which operates throughout all our lives.

And, finally, we are taught that ultimate success, the complete fulfillment of all our highest dreams is certain for each and every one of us. And the harder we work, and the more sincere and beautiful our lives, the more loving and tender we are to all living beings, the quicker will we grow out of our human weaknesses and begin to shine forth with all our divine powers.

Now, one last thought. When one really understands this great idea, that the meaning and purpose of our human life is to evolve to perfection spiritually, culturally, intellectually and physically, then, if we're sensible, we will collaborate. We will try to cut out everything which holds us back and materializes us, and try to develop to the full all the finer qualities and nobler attributes. In this collaboration with God's law, which is evolution, in this cooperation with nature, we shall find the secret of happiness and well-being and contentment and swift unfoldment in our lives.

## MEMORIES OF FORMER LIVES

One of the oldest and most universal of all human beliefs is that man evolves to perfection through successive lives on earth. This is called Reincarnation. And one part of the evidence in its support consists of tested memories of former lives on earth. In this talk I am going to tell you some accurately tested accounts of people who have remembered their earlier lives. When one studies, one finds that such memories are far more common than one would think. People are shy about them, but there are many printed accounts.

I'm going to read you, first of all, one about ancient Egypt where two people remembered the same thing. It's told by an officer in the Indian army, who remembered distinctly being a high official in the court of one of the Pharaohs of old Egypt. He fell in love with a dancing girl, but the disparity in their social positions made marriage impossible. So they eloped. They fled one night into the Theban desert and had hardly got clear of the city before they were overtaken by a sand storm. And before he could wrap her scarf around her mouth and her nose the sand enveloped them and they were both suffocated. Often and often did he have the dream and the memory of choking, as though repeating this supreme incident in the past. One night, he was in at a conversazione of the Royal Society in London, knowing no one (as he thought). Then, looking round, he saw a girl leaning against the opposite wall, staring at him. Something impelled him to move towards her. He did so. And she simultaneously moved toward him across the room. She reached him. She put out both her hands and said, "Suffocated". "What!" he said, "Do you remember?" "Yes, indeed," she said, "and how you tried to wrap my scarf around my mouth."

There is a case--a very unusual case--where two people had the same memory of an earlier life. And I may as well say that the story ends happily for them in this life, for they are married now.

Here is another story--from Palestine. It's the story of the legal recognition of a memory of former lives to settle a boundary problem. It tells about a certain Mansour At-rash and is vouched for by a large number of persons in the



Djebel near Mt. Lebanon. This Mansour Atrash married a girl of twelve by the name of Umruman, meaning Mother of the Pomegranate. Shortly afterwards, he was killed in a raid. And these events occurred about thirty years ago. But, at the exact hour of his premature death, a fact which was afterwards verified, there was born to a family of Druses, hundreds of miles away, up in the mountains of Lebanon, a boy whom they named Najib Abu Faray. Well, this boy grew to be twenty years of age without ever leaving his native mountains, and then by some chance he was taken to the old mountain home of Mansour Atrash. As soon as he reached that Mountain, he said, "I must be in a dream. I've seen all these places before. They are more familiar to me than my own mountains at home." And when he came to the village in which Mansour Atrash had lived he said, "Why, this is my village, and I know my house is up a certain street and just around a certain corner." And he walked through the twisting streets straight up to a walled up recess. There he had the bricks torn down and discovered a small bag of money which he remembered having put there in his former life as Atrash. Later, he was taken to some vineyards belonging to the Atrash family where there were disputed boundaries. He pointed out the boundaries that he said he himself had laid when he was Mansour Atrash. And, strangely, a Druse court of law accepted them. And they are the boundaries now.

This man had now given so many proofs of his identity that he was even recognized by the children as their reincarnated father. And he received ten camel loads of grain as a present from the Atrash family. So you see there that, among the Druses, there is no doubt about reincarnation.

Now, here's a story from India. Towards the end of 1922, a three year old Indian boy named Vishwa Nath of Bareilly, India, surprised his parents by giving them minute details of what he claimed was his previous life. The boy pestered his father about a place called Pilibhit, wanting to know how far it was from Bareilly and begging his father to take him there. His father and mother, believing (quite wrongly, of course) that children with such memories die young, tried everything in their power to make the boy forget his strange memories. But, as he grew older, his preoccupation with his past life grew more intense. At last, yielding to the boy's entreaties, his parents took him to the govern-

ment high school at Pilibhit. The boy said he didn't recognize the school. And then they found that it was, in fact, a new building. How could he recognize it?

Vishwa then astounded his hearers with a wealth of information about his previous life in Pilibhit. He said his neighbor had been a Lafa-Sunder Lal who boasted a green gate, a sword and a gun, and who held nautch parties in the courtyard of his home. He said his own father had been a landowner with a great fondness for wine, fish and nautch girls. He claimed that he had studied in the government school, passing in Urdu, Hindi and English and reaching the sixth class. All this was subsequently confirmed as quite correct.

Then Vishwa described the house in which he had lived, including its interior. And when taken to the building, everything was found exactly as he had described it, including the position of a staircase. The little boy put his finger correctly upon a man in a group photograph as being Har Narai. Finally, capping his amazing memory of another life, he pointed to himself in the picture as a little boy seated in a chair. The boy in the photograph proved to be Laxmi Narain who had died in 1918 at the age of thirty-two.

Among other details which proved to be quite correct, were the exact site of class 6 in the local school, the appearance of his teacher, the names of places where he worked and the name of his own personal servant. This boy's maternal uncle corroborated many of these statements including facts that everyone else had forgotten. Of course, in India, reincarnation is taken as a matter of course.

Now, here is a third story told by H. Fielding Hall, the famous author, who vouches for it. It is the story of a little girl of seven, who told him in detail the account of her previous incarnation in which she said she had been a man who ran a marionette show. To test her, her parents brought her a marionette doll. She at once manipulated it correctly although she had never seen a marionette before. "I've been married four times," she said. "Two of my wives died. One I divorced, and one was living when I died and is living still. I loved her very much. The one I divorced was a very dreadful woman." Pointing to a scar on her shoulder in her new life, she added, "See this. She took up a



chopper and cut me." That rather suggests, I might interpolate, that some scars can be brought over from former lives. Well, the author, Fielding Hall, made some inquiries and found that a birthmark on the child corresponded exactly to a mark which had been given to a former owner of a marionette show by his wife who had been traced. The divorced wife and the much-loved wife were still living, and when asked why she did not go to live with the wife she loved so much, the little girl replied, "But that was all in my former life."

Theosophy, you know, supports this idea that man does evolve to perfection through successive lives on earth, and that this attainment to perfection, or Christhood, is the real goal and purpose of human existence. Reincarnation provides the means. It gives you the time and the opportunity and all the experiences necessary in order to attain to perfection. It enables you to bring out every faculty, develop it to the full and learn to express it with flawless genius. The perfect man, the adept, is the result of life's evolutionary processes.

And then again, the law of cause and effect insures for each one of us complete and exact justice. For this law of cause and effect, "sowing and reaping" as St. Paul called it, operates not only in this life, but also from life to life, and our conditions from birth onwards are not merely good luck or bad luck. They are the result of our own preceding actions.

Theosophy adds that this attainment to perfection is utterly certain for each and every one of us. One day we shall, in due course, attain to our great goal, which, as St. Paul put it, is to "come unto a perfected man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."\*

And these memories of former lives do support this idea of evolution to perfection through successive lives on earth.

\* Eph 4:13

## JUSTICE IN HUMAN AFFAIRS

In this talk, I am going to consider with you whether there really is justice for humanity on our planet, whether there really is fair play for man. All thoughtful people have to face this question sooner or later. They find themselves perplexed by the difficulties, the apparent futility and the seeming injustice of common human existence. Take, for example, five main problems: the place of apparent accident in life; fair play and justice in the general experience in human affairs; infant prodigies; death, bereavement and reunion after death; and the dual problem of man's health and happiness and the means of reducing to a minimum his sicknesses and sorrows. These are real human difficulties and problems. Let us look at them and see what Theosophy says in answer and solution of them.

One general answer to be found in all world scriptures and religions and on the lips of all great teachers is the existence and operation in life of the law of cause and effect, of action and reaction. Compensation, Emerson used to call it. This causative sequence is regarded in Theosophy as the one decisive force in human affairs. Under the law of cause and effect, each one of us makes or mars his own life by his own conduct. All conditions and all experiences are said to be self produced under the operation of this causative law. You'll remember St. Paul describes it in these words: "God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Our Lord also continually repeated it. "For verily I say unto you till heaven and earth pass one jot and one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled," he said. And again, "Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again. For this is the Law and the Prophets."

Now, let us take this and apply it to some well known historical people and events in life. I have been studying especially the life story of Abraham Lincoln and his rise to fame and his strange death by assassination. Was that just good luck and bad luck or was the law working? It is a serious matter, because, of course, his assassination was one of the most fateful occurrences in the history of the United States, in the history of the negro people and, indeed, of the whole world. And yet, I find that four appar-



ently chance events made Abraham Lincoln president of the United States. Let us look at them briefly.

Remember, he was first a rather disappointed and discouraged lawyer in the middle west. In 1860 the failure of his son, Robert, in the Harvard entrance examination caused Lincoln to travel to New York and Connecticut. And this failure of his son to pass the examination was the first apparent chance-happening in Lincoln's rise to fame. For when it was known that he was passing through New York City an invitation was sent to him to deliver a lecture there. This was the second event in the arranging of which he had had no part. Well, he held that vast meeting spellbound by his logic. And at its close, the audience broke into wild and prolonged enthusiasm. And this, in its turn, led to many other engagements and to Lincoln's later being regarded as a possible candidate for nomination for President of the U. S. A. by the Republican party.

Then came the third apparently chance event. A certain Richard J. Oglesby of Decatur, a Republican politician, as doubtless you well know, became moved by a sudden sense of showmanship. He remembered that Lincoln and John Hanks, another Republican, in their youth had split rails on a farm. And in those pioneer days, of course, railsplitting was a sign that a man had his roots deep in the American soil. Well, at the Republican Convention of 1860, John Hanks appeared on the stage carrying the very rails these two men had split ten years before in 1850. On the rails was that large sign now famous in history: "Abraham Lincoln, the railsplitter, candidate for President, 1860." The convention went wild. "Abe Lincoln, the railsplitter" became a national slogan.

He was nominated, but his better known opponent, Seward, was greatly favored and on a preliminary test vote defeated Lincoln. But, then came the fourth apparent accident. The voting papers for the official polling, which had been promised by the printer by 9 P. M. did not arrive until next morning. And that printer became the instrument of destiny. For, seizing their opportunity, Lincoln's friends went feverishly to work, and by next morning they had changed public opinion, and Lincoln secured the Republican nomination. Later, in the year 1861, he was elected the sixteenth president of the U. S. A., and re-elected in 1864.

So, you see, apparent chance decided the fate and development of both Lincoln and the American people, and especially the negroes. He later delivered his famous anti-slavery pronouncement which led to the Civil War and to the freeing of thousands of slaves. And then, in 1865, he was assassinated by John Wilkes Boothe. And that brought to an end a very great career apparently founded upon accident, chance, or at least upon events which Lincoln himself did not initiate. Was it all mere chance? Or was some principle in operation which, under strict justice, was being meted out to Abraham Lincoln?

No, says Theosophy, it was not mere chance. Strict justice was, in fact, being done. If you can believe in reincarnation, you'll find the logical explanation of it all. In former lives on earth, Lincoln had so acted that the events of his nineteenth century life were practically inevitable. Theosophy teaches that mere chance is completely impossible. Not even the smallest injustice can ever occur to any human being or any nation. Everything happens either to an individual or to a nation according to a preceding originating action under the law of cause and effect.

Now, here we have a scientific philosophy of life well worth serious consideration. In its two doctrines you see causality in human affairs, justice, and man's evolution to perfection through a series of earthly lives. Now, these twin ideas provide a logical solution for otherwise insoluble problems. They also make possible a belief based on reason in both assured justice and a noble destiny awaiting every man, namely, development of perfection of the power to help. These two doctrines, I think, are indispensable to the mental peace of the humanitarian who is also a logician. For without reincarnation and the compensatory law the ephemeral nature of human life and the utter injustices and inequalities of human experience pose a riddle which defies rational solution. But together, these two principles of rebirth and causation throw a flood of light upon man's existence.

In that light his life can be fully comprehended from its beginning, through its evolution, its tribulations and its happinesses, and on to its glorious goal. A magnificent philosophy of life. And if we can accept it, we shall become mentally illumined, we shall have courage born of reason, and we can face the difficulties and trials of life.



For we know that our own preceding hurtful actions are the cause of all our sorrows and that harmlessness and love to all creatures--including our own bodies--will absolutely assure our health and happiness. An inspiring and logical philosophy of life, don't you think?

Let me re-state it. Perfected manhood is the assured and certain destiny of the spiritual soul of each and every one of us. Reincarnation is the evolutionary method. It gives us time, brings us opportunities and experiences. Then the law of action and reaction, which is continually modified by further actions and reactions in their turn, insures justice to every human being. And the attainment of perfection is rendered certain by the interior presence of an infinite divine power, ceaselessly at work within each and every one of us, the God within us, "the Christ in you, your hope of glory", as St. Paul put it, a divine power ceaselessly at work within the spiritual self of each and every one of us.

So, if this is true for us, then we can find the way of happiness by cooperating with nature's transcendental task of producing a perfected man, a sage, an adept. When we collaborate with that idea and that plan, we do not set up friction against the life around us. We live in harmonious relationship with the divine intent, with God's purpose and Nature's great plan.

It is this harmonious relationship with life, this helpful, cooperative, friendly, affectionate, compassionate mode of life in relationship with every other human being which is, I believe, the real secret of happiness. For then you don't set up frictions, do you see, you don't provoke the retaliation of the law. You are in harmony with God, with Nature, with life itself. This, my friends, I believe as a Theosophist, this cooperation with the great evolutionary plan is the secret of health, of happiness and of growing powers for service to man. And this is true Theosophy.

## ATLANTIS, FACT OR FABLE

I am going to think over with you the idea that a mysterious continent once occupied the place now covered by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Was there such a place as Atlantis? Were there such people as the Atlanteans? Does the persistence of a legend throughout many, many centuries indicate a foundation of fact? How is it that similar monuments like pyramids, similar cultural developments, flora, fauna and insects are found on both sides of the Atlantic? Was there once a land bridge? These are rather interesting problems, aren't they? And they are today occupying many thoughtful minds.

It was Plato, you know, who first related publicly the story of the people of Atlantis apart from references in the Hindu scriptures, the Puranas. But Plato wrote that they had formed the oldest civilization in the world, these Atlanteans--that they possessed great cities with palaces and temples of gold, with huge golden images of their deities, roads of great size and length, and chains of canals; and that they rejoiced in a climate so benign that they reaped two harvests a year. Plato also went on to say that they owned ships and war chariots and bred the finest horses and cattle. Atlantis, said Plato in his book *Timaeus*, was situated in front of the straits of Gibraltar, then called the Pillars of Hercules, and it led to a succession of islands through which one might pass to the whole of the opposite continent. That is to say, to what is now America. Justification for the belief that such a great continent did once exist linking the Americas with Africa and Europe also rests upon quite a number of physical facts. Let me tell you of some of them.

For instance, the so-called Dolphin Ridge is a plateau nine thousand feet above the Atlantic Ocean bed, and it extends from near the coast of Ireland to the north coast of South America near to French Guiana. Dry land fossils have been found on the bed of the Atlantic. Dry land fossils, mark you. And then, lava from this plateau brought up by cable-laying vessels is demonstrably dry land lava. Furthermore, it was erupted less than fifteen thousand years ago. Then, there is the literature of the Mayan people and the Aztecs. These contain flood and creation stories closely resembling those of the Book of Genesis and of the scriptures of Egypt,



India, Babylon and Chaldea. They tell the same story far away to the east across what is now the Atlantic Ocean.

Then, Egyptian manuscripts located by Dr. Henry Schliemann, the discoverer of Troy, have convinced him that Atlantis exists. One such manuscript records that an expedition was sent by Pharoah about 7,650 B. C. to seek traces of the motherland from whence Egyptians first were thought to have come. None were found, however. Indeed, all had disappeared, it is stated, in a flood in 10,000 B. C. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Egyptian civilization has no known root and no primitive period. A papyrus found by Dr. Schliemann written by the Priest-historian Manetho makes reference to a period 13,900 years ago as the date of the kings of Atlantis. Dr. Schliemann is said to have found at Troy an "owl vase" bearing Phoenician hieroglyphics reading: "From King Cronos of Atlantis". The owl vase is a vase which is decorated and shaped rather like an owl. Strangely enough, this peculiar kind of owl vase has been discovered as duplicated in a collection of objects from Tiahuenaco, far away in South America.

And then again, pyramids, monoliths and semi-circles of stones, like the Druid formations in England and Brittany were found on the Island of Bornaco, off South America. Furthermore, the step pyramids of Egypt are duplicated in America. In American Indian languages there are over one hundred words that are similar to words of the same meaning in the Arabic and Greek languages. And the myths of Greece are contained in some American Indian stories, like the myth of Atlas. They are also repeated in the Mayan tradition. In fact, the people of Atlantis were called A-t-l-a, and the syllable "atl" is the root syllable of many places in America today. Atlanta, of course, Popocatepetl, and the name of the Toltec ruler and law giver, Quexal-co-atl.

Also, there is the fauna and the flora. A close correspondence exists between the flora and the fauna of southern U. S. A. and that of Europe. And that strange animal, the monk seal, is to be found in both the Mediterranean and the West Indies. And yet, it never goes to the open sea. Certain identical ants are found in the Azores and in U. S. A. Moths and butterflies of the Canary Islands are identical with those of America. None of these could fly across the Atlantic. Then, the Basque language of one section of the people

of Spain has no affinity with other European languages. It is, however, quite similar to aboriginal tongues of America in grammatical structure. And then the Cro-Magnon skulls which were found in France resemble those found in Lagoasanta in Brazil.

And these similarities, surely, cannot all be coincidences. They do point rather definitely to the existence of a land connection. Indeed, it is necessary to account for them.

Well, what has Theosophy, whose teachings are the fruits of the occult investigations of countless generations of seers, to say about Atlantis and the Atlanteans? First, it says yes, there was such a continent. And the history of Atlantis is said to be divided into four epochs, separated by four cataclysms. Those great seers who examined the past with their highly developed powers give us a great deal of information in modern Theosophical literature concerning the Atlantean continent, broken up, as I said, by four great catastrophes or cataclysms of nature.

Up to 850,000 years ago, when the first great flood occurred, Atlantis extended from a few degrees east of Iceland to about the site now occupied by Rio de Janeiro. It embraced Texas, the Gulf of Mexico, the southern and eastern states of America and Labrador and the area from there right across the Atlantic to Iceland and Ireland. Scotland and a small portion of the north of England were once included in Atlantis. It really reached from Brazil right across to the African gold coast.

Now, what about the Atlantean peoples themselves? It is a huge subject, of course, and I can only refer you to Theosophical literature if you want to follow it up. It is very fascinating. There you will find that the Atlanteans were great colonizers, sailors and merchants. They founded an empire in Peru and one still earlier in Egypt. But, eventually, serious malpractices including very evil forms of sorcery and necromancy and black magic developed and threatened the progress of the whole Atlantean race. They recovered eventually, however, and gave birth to our own race, the Aryan race; for humanity ever progresses from Race to Race.

But, you know, the Atlantean peoples are still numerically preponderant on this, our earth. Here is a list of some of



some of the nations which still belong to that old "fourth race", as it is sometimes called. All the Laplanders, Patagonians, all the American Indians of North and South America, the inland Chinese and their countless millions, the Basque people of Spain just mentioned, the Magyars of Hungary, all the Japanese, Mongolian, Malayan and Eskimo peoples. All of these are still living relics or remnants of the Atlantean people. And they are numerically preponderant now on earth.

But there has been born from them this, our later Aryan race, which is now gradually taking charge and taking lead of life on this, our earth. Thus, humanity moves onward, Race by Race. Seven races will occupy this, our planet, it is said, each with seven daughter Races. And we, the spiritual selves of men, pass through these races, learn lessons in each of them, develop our powers in them life after life, that is to say, if you can believe in reincarnation. Theosophy teaches it. And thus we have grown, you see, to our present evolutionary, cultural and intellectual stature. It is a magnificent philosophy, is it not, that man evolves continually through race after race, nation after nation, on his long pilgrimage which will bring him inevitably and surely to the stature of the perfected man.

Inspired with this knowledge, the Theosophist cannot despair. He cannot fear that all human achievement could ever be swallowed up in unheeding, everlasting night. No. The Theosophist, at any rate, like so many other people imbued with its wisdom, knows that mankind moves through innumerable ages to ever increasing power and wisdom and glory.

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